coalfield fires has been posed for UNDP assistance. In addition, some private overseas agencies/companies have also expressed interest in participating in dealing with the problem of fires in Jharia Coalfield. However no decision has so far been taken by the Government to entrust the work to any foreign company.

(f) After nationalisation of coal mines concerted efforts have been made through implementation of various schemes for dealing with major fires of Jharia Coalfield. As a result of these efforts, five fires have been successfully extinguished. At 16 sites fires have been contained and the work to completely extinguish these fires is in progress. The remaining fire projects are at the various stages of implementation. Effective monitoring of the progress of the fire projects for improvement of the effectiveness of the control of mine operation is being done.

Retrenchment of personnel in Coal India Limited

1220. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the World Bank has identified 50,000 personnel in Coal India Limited as "surplus" staff who need to be retrenched immediately as a measure to make the public undertaking economically viable; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S.B. NYAMAGOUDA): (a) and (b) No, Sir, It is not a fact that the World Bank identified 50,000 personnel in Coal India Ltd. as surplus staff who need to be retrenched. A three menber World Bank team was in India during January-February, 1991 for review of the progress of on-going proejcts. This team during their meetings (in Coal India Ltd. and Department of Coal) had discussed various issues related to coal projects including *inter-alia* the ways and means to improve financial performance of Coal Sector and the the modalities of redeployment of surplus workers if any, from mines that are closed down due to deplation of coal reserves and reduction in unproductive manpower with a view to improving output per manshift.

These points were discussed generally and neither any figure about excess number of workers was mentioned nor was any specific suggestion received from World Bank.

Cash and Carry Schemes for distribution of Coal

1221. SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have started cash and Carry Scheme for distribution of coal to the consumers ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the scheme is causing hardships to the consumers ; and

(c) if so, what action Government propose to remove complication involved in the scheme ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) to (c) : State Electricity Boards and other power Utilities had accumulated arrears of over Rs. 1800 crores as on 31·8·91 payable to Coal India Limited (CIL) towards price of coal supplied to them. The arrears were on the increase and CIL was finding it difficult to manage their cash flow. Ministry of Coal therefore advised CIL to start supplying coal to the State Electricity Boards